



## STATE OF NEW JERSEY

In the Matter of Anna Miglio, Hudson  
County, Sheriff's Office

**FINAL ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION  
OF THE  
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**

CSC Docket No. 2024-163 and 2024-  
164

OAL Docket No. CSR 06973-23

**ISSUED: AUGUST 13, 2025**

The appeal of Anna Miglio, Correctional Police Sergeant, Department of Corrections, removal, effective July 18, 2023, on charges, was heard by Administrative Law Judge Mamta Patel (ALJ), who rendered her initial decision on June 30, 2025. Exceptions were filed on behalf of the appellant and a reply was filed on behalf of the appointing authority.

Having considered the record and the ALJ's initial decision, and having made an independent evaluation of the record, including a thorough review of the exceptions and reply, the Civil Service Commission (Commission), at its meeting on August 13, 2025, adopted the ALJ's Findings of Facts and Conclusions of Law and her recommendation to uphold the removal.

The Commission makes the following comments. There is no serious dispute as to the sustained charges in this matter. Rather, the appellant challenges the imposition of removal, arguing mitigating factors, such as the appellant's prior work history. The Commission rejects these contentions. In recommending upholding the removal, the ALJ stated the following:

In this case, Miglio has been employed by the DOC since August 2009 and has served in a supervisory role as a sergeant since February 2017. As a public servant whose conduct is visible to the public, her personal involvement with Putnam and failure to recuse herself could reasonably be perceived to have compromised her objectivity or independence. As LaBonne and Lane testified, officers are guided in maintaining the highest standards of integrity, a principle instilled from the beginning. Miglio's training records show her consistent completion of ethics training since 2010, with the most recent sessions held in January and February 2022. During this period, she was involved in a

romantic relationship with Putnam. Miglio was aware of her obligation to report the relationship but chose not to disclose it, following Putnam's request for secrecy. Her actions demonstrate susceptibility to undue influence by a subordinate's request. Additionally, Miglio assisted Putnam in preparing for his interview before the selection panel and did not recuse herself during his interview, despite their personal relationship. This is particularly egregious given her position as Putnam's supervisor. Motivated by personal interest, Miglio, who is entrusted with authority, chose to prioritize her own benefit and favor one candidate over others who did not receive similar attention. This conduct exemplifies a violation of ethical standards, putting personal interests above adherence to established rules and recusal responsibilities. Each of these factors individually undermines Miglio's trustworthiness as a corrections officer, and collectively, they cast doubt on her qualification to serve as a sergeant within the DOC.

Furthermore, what is more troubling is Miglio's failure to admit her mistakes and accept responsibility, which makes her unfit to continue as a corrections officer. Therefore, I **CONCLUDE** that Miglio must be removed from her employment in the DOC.

Regarding the penalty, similar to its assessment of the charges, the Commission's review of the penalty is *de novo*. In addition to its consideration of the seriousness of the underlying incident in determining the proper penalty, the Commission also utilizes, when appropriate, the concept of progressive discipline. *West New York v. Bock*, 38 N.J. 500 (1962). In determining the propriety of the penalty, several factors must be considered, including the nature of the appellant's offense, the concept of progressive discipline, and the employee's prior record. *George v. North Princeton Developmental Center*, 96 N.J.A.R. 2d (CSV) 463. However, it is well established that where the underlying conduct is of an egregious nature, the imposition of a penalty up to and including removal is appropriate, regardless of an individual's disciplinary history. *See Henry v. Rahway State Prison*, 81 N.J. 571 (1980). It is settled that the theory of progressive discipline is not a "fixed and immutable rule to be followed without question." Rather, it is recognized that some disciplinary infractions are so serious that removal is appropriate notwithstanding a largely unblemished prior record. *See Carter v. Bordentown*, 191 N.J. 474 (2007). Even when a law enforcement officer does not possess a prior disciplinary record after many unblemished years of employment, the seriousness of an offense may nevertheless warrant the penalty of removal where it is likely to undermine the public trust. In this regard, the Commission emphasizes that a law enforcement officer is held to a higher standard than a civilian public employee. *See Moorestown v. Armstrong*, 89 N.J. Super. 560 (App. Div. 1965), *cert. denied*, 47 N.J. 80 (1966). *See also, In re Phillips*, 117 N.J. 567 (1990).

Here, the Commission wholeheartedly agrees with the ALJ's assessment of the penalty. It is clear that as a law enforcement employee, the appellant's misconduct

was egregious and cannot be minimized. Such misconduct is inimical to what the public expects from a law enforcement officer, and in this case, a supervisory law enforcement officer, who is held to a higher standard. While the Commission acknowledges the appellant's previously unblemished disciplinary history, it cannot ignore the serious ethical and moral breaches committed by the appellant. As such, a penalty less than removal would serve to undermine the public trust. Accordingly, the Commission finds the penalty of removal neither disproportionate to the offense nor shocking to the conscious.

### ORDER

The Civil Service Commission finds that the action of the appointing authority in removing the appellant was justified. The Commission therefore upholds that action and dismisses the appeal of Anna Miglio.

This is the final administrative determination in this matter. Any further review should be pursued in a judicial forum.

DECISION RENDERED BY THE  
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION ON  
THE 13<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF AUGUST, 2025



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Allison Chris Myers  
Chairperson  
Civil Service Commission

Inquiries  
and  
Correspondence

Nicholas F. Angiulo  
Director  
Division of Appeals and Regulatory Affairs  
Civil Service Commission  
P.O. Box 312  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0312

Attachment



**State of New Jersey**  
OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE LAW

**INITIAL DECISION**

OAL DKT. NO. CSR 06973-23

AGENCY DKT. NO. N/A

2024-163 +  
164

**IN THE MATTER OF ANNA MIGLIO,  
NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF  
CORRECTIONS (COHQ).**

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**David J. Heintjes, Esq.,** for appellant

**Gary W. Baldwin,** Deputy Attorney General, for respondent (Matthew J. Platkin,  
Attorney General of New Jersey, attorney)

Record Closed: May 7, 2025

Decided: June 30, 2025

BEFORE **MAMTA PATEL, ALJ:**

**STATEMENT OF THE CASE**

Anna Miglio, a correctional police sergeant, failed to disclose a sexual relationship with a subordinate and did not recuse herself from official duties, including serving on a selection panel and giving him a favorable rating for a promotion, despite her training and in disregard of the rules and regulations that prohibit conduct undermining trust. Must Miglio be terminated? Yes. When an employee continues to evade responsibility and damages the employer's and the public's trust, they render themselves unsuitable for continued employment. In re Herrmann, 192 N.J. 19 (2007).

### **PROCEDURAL HISTORY**

On June 6, 2023, respondent, the New Jersey Department of Corrections (DOC), served Miglio with an amended Preliminary Notice of Disciplinary Action. In the preliminary notice, the DOC charged Miglio with conduct unbecoming a public employee in violation of N.J.A.C. 4A:2-2.3(a)(6). The DOC also charged Miglio with other sufficient cause under N.J.A.C. 4A:2-2.3(a)(12) for alleged violations of the following DOC policies and procedures: Human Resources Bulletin 84-17, as amended, section C11, conduct unbecoming an employee; E1, violation of a rule, regulation, policy, procedure, order, or administrative decision; E2, intentional abuse or misuse of authority or position for alleged violations of the Uniform Ethics Code, General Standards of Conduct Section II; Recusal on Official Matters, IX; and Conflicts of Interest, XIII. (J-3.)

The preliminary notice specifies that Miglio failed to document her close relationship with Senior Correctional Police Officer Shawn Putnam and did not disqualify herself from a selection panel when Putnam applied for the full-time instructor position. In addition, the preliminary notice specifies that as a panelist, Miglio shared potential interview questions with Putnam, helped him prepare for the interview, and used her position to give him an advantage. Moreover, the preliminary notice specifies that in doing so, Miglio compromised the trust placed in her as a State officer.

Miglio waived her right to a departmental hearing, and on July 18, 2023, the DOC issued a Final Notice of Disciplinary Action.

In the final notice, the DOC sustained all the charges and specifications.

On July 28, 2023, Miglio perfected the filing of her appeal of the determination simultaneously with the Civil Service Commission and the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) for a hearing as a contested case under N.J.A.C. 4A:2-2.13(d).

On June 13, 2024, Miglio's counsel requested a waiver of the 180-day final disposition period for medical reasons. On June 17, 2024, following a conference call, Miglio's request was granted.

On March 10, 12, and 13, 2025, I held a hearing. On May 7, 2025, the parties submitted their post-hearing briefs, and I closed the record on that date. On June 23, 2025, an order of extension was entered in this matter to allow an extension of time in which to file the Initial Decision.

## **DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS OF FACT**

### **Introduction**

The DOC manages and operates prison facilities in New Jersey, trains its officers, and houses its training academy at the New Jersey National Guard Training Center in Sea Girt. The Correctional Staff Training Academy is part of the Division of Training, Recruitment, and Professional Development. The recruit training unit is a residential program where correctional trainees can choose to stay at the academy from Monday to Friday; they are released late on Friday afternoons for the weekend.

Miglio began her employment with the DOC as a correction officer trainee in August 2009. After graduating from the correctional training academy, she was assigned to Bayside State Prison. In February 2017, Miglio was promoted to sergeant. In February 2021, she was recruited to teach at the training academy and was released from her assignment at Bayside every Tuesday to observe and learn. During this time, she met Correctional Police Officer Shawn Putnam, who was already working there as an adjunct instructor with a permanent assignment at East Jersey State Prison, and they developed a friendship. Miglio testified that in May 2021, she and Putnam began a sexual relationship. After the training academy class ended in May 2021, Miglio returned to her regular position at Bayside, and Putnam went back to East Jersey. Throughout this period, Miglio and Putnam continued their sexual relationship.

Conflict

LaBonne

Between September 2022 and December 2024, Major Brian LaBonne served as the Regional Major at the DOC's Central Office Headquarters. LaBonne has worked for the DOC for twenty-one years. In his role as Regional Major, LaBonne was responsible for reviewing and updating DOC policies and touring facilities to ensure correctional police officers followed the DOC's policies and procedures. Due to his extensive service, knowledge, and experience, LaBonne spoke confidently about his expertise regarding DOC policies and procedures. LaBonne testified that the conduct of correctional police officers is governed by the Law Enforcement Personnel Rules and Regulations (Rules and Regulations) (R-17), and that all officers receive a copy of the Rules and Regulations during their recruit training at the training academy.

LaBonne emphasized that Article I, General Provisions, Section 1, of the Rules and Regulations requires correctional police officers to follow the laws, statutes, or ordinances of the United States and any state within its jurisdiction. LaBonne also highlighted that the Rules and Regulations include sections of the Uniform Ethics Code (UEC), specifically in Article 1, Section 2, which states that officers should avoid behavior that damages public trust, and in Article III, Professional Conduct, Section 3, which reminds custody staff that they are public servants twenty-four hours a day, held to a higher standard, and responsible for their conduct both on and off duty. LaBonne further pointed out that Article IX, Conflicts of Interest, Section 1, of the Rules and Regulations mandates that "Officers shall refrain from any personal relationship which reasonably tends to create the appearance that such a relationship will interfere with the proper performance of duty," and Section 6 mandates that "Officers shall neither use nor attempt to use their official positions to secure unwarranted privileges or advantages, either for themselves or others." Additionally, LaBonne emphasized that the DOC has a vested interest in preventing behavior that could damage trust or confidence or discredit the DOC or its officers. (R-17.)

Above all, LaBonne testified that the Rules and Regulations, along with the Ethics training that correctional officers also receive, clearly state that supervisors must disclose personal, familial, or dating relationships by completing a recusal form available to all officers.

### Lane

Dana Lane was recently appointed director of the Equal Employment Division and serves as the ethics officer for the DOC. She was appointed in September 2024. The Equal Employment Division is responsible for implementing and investigating alleged violations of the State's Policy Prohibiting Discrimination in the Workplace, as well as managing and addressing ethics issues. Before joining the DOC, Lane served as the Equal Employment Officer at the Office of the Public Defender. She also worked at the Department of Banking and Insurance, where she handled employee grievances and disciplinary matters, conducted investigations into discrimination claims, and reviewed ethics issues. Before that, Lane spent a year and a half at the New Jersey Ethics Commission as the compliance officer. She has interpreted the UEC for approximately thirteen years. While at the Commission, Lane was responsible for auditing State executive departments, agencies, and State colleges and universities to ensure compliance with the UEC, as well as conducting training on the UEC.

Lane testified that the UEC is the standard set of rules applicable to all State employees within the executive branch of the New Jersey State government, governing their day-to-day operations. While State agencies can add to the guidelines to meet specific needs, the Commission must approve any modifications, and no guidelines can be removed. The UEC covers conduct at work and activities outside of work, including relationships with family, friends, and others. Its goal is to prevent behaviors that could lead to conflicts or the appearance of conflicts and to address issues early before they become problems. All employees receive a copy of the UEC and participate in annual training, which requires them to report any conflicts or potential conflicts.

Lane identified several provisions in the UEC that address conflicts, including the General Standards of Conduct, which require officers to avoid knowingly acting in ways



that might reasonably create an impression of suspicion among the public or damage public trust. These provisions in the UEC also prohibit officers from using their positions to gain advantages for themselves or others and explicitly mandate employees to recuse themselves from any official duties where a personal interest conflicts with their responsibilities. (R-16.)

Lane explained that personal interests arise when employees perform their duties involving family members, friends, business partners, or romantic partners, making it necessary to report such activities to facilitate a recusal or other resolution. Lane clarified that an "official matter" includes any work-related duties, such as employment decisions, supervision, evaluations, interviews, and work assignments. Lane further explained that when officers or employees have an ethical question regarding a conflict or recusal, they can consult their supervisor or contact the Equal Employment Division directly.

The Division maintains a file on Miglio, which includes a letter from the Commission authorizing the DOC to carry out the ethics investigation into Miglio's alleged UEC violation. Lane testified that the Division had no record showing that either Miglio or anyone acting on her behalf had contacted the Division regarding any inquiry, conflict, or recusal. Indeed, Miglio's file does not include any recusal form.

Significantly, both LaBonne and Lane testified that all officers at the DOC receive annual ethics training; that Miglio's training records show she has received annual ethics training, except for a couple of years since 2010; and that Miglio completed an ethics training on January 26, 2022, and received an ethics briefing on February 2, 2022, all of which were during the relevant time period. (R-14.)

Continuation of Relationship

Miglio

On March 23, 2023, the DOC's Special Investigations Division (SID) initiated an investigation into allegations of misconduct against Putnam based on reports submitted by Miglio. The investigation was assigned to senior investigator Daniel Caciccia. Caciccia testified that he has been employed with the DOC for eighteen years and has served in the SID as a senior investigator for about nine years, during which time he has conducted over one hundred investigations. Caciccia explained that as part of the investigation, he reviewed a report submitted by Miglio dated February 27, 2023, in which she disclosed that she and Putnam had been in a relationship. This raised concerns because it seemed Miglio had been supervising Putnam while they were involved and possibly even afterward. Based on the February report, Caciccia noted that Miglio had not disclosed the relationship. He testified that on April 3, 2023, he and SID Deputy Chief Jones recorded a statement from Miglio as part of the investigation, which was summarized in an SID report. (R-5; R-20A.) I watched the video recording of Miglio and reviewed her interview summary in the SID report. During the SID interview, Miglio denied that she and Putnam were in a dating relationship, claiming "it was just sex." However, Miglio acknowledged that she and Putnam watched football games together, went to the beach together, and agreed to meet outside of work—all activities she did not plan with other co-workers. In the interview, Miglio said she consulted with Alycia Lewis, assistant superintendent and ethics liaison officer, at Bayside, who told her she did not have to report her relationship with Putnam.

On April 11, 2023, Caciccia and SID investigator Matthew Schlusselfeld recorded a statement from Lewis as part of the investigation, which was also summarized in an SID report. I watched the video recording of Lewis and reviewed the summary of her interview in the SID report. In the video, Lewis acknowledged that she served as the ethics liaison officer during her time at Bayside State Prison. Lewis denies ever being approached by Miglio for guidance on recusal or a sexual relationship. Additionally, Lewis said that, in her opinion as an ethics liaison officer, a sexual relationship between a supervisor and a subordinate should be documented, and she would have told her so. (R-6; R-20B.)

At the hearing, Miglio testified that she was not Putnam's supervisor. She stated that she worked the second shift while Putnam was on the first shift at the training academy. However, there was an overlap of at least two hours between the two shifts. Despite this, Miglio acknowledged that she could issue orders to Putnam as "an officer." She also downplayed the nature of their personal relationship, testifying that she and Putnam were only in a "sexual relationship," not a dating relationship. Nevertheless, Miglio testified that she and Putnam often spent weekends together and that she frequently stayed at his house.

Miglio further testified that in August 2021, when she returned to Bayside from the training academy, she encountered Lewis, their ethics liaison officer in Center Control, and asked her, "If I was fucking somebody that worked at another jail, but we were both at the academy, did I need to be worried about a recusal." Miglio testified that she was "practically laughed out of Center by the people that were present." Miglio testified that Lewis responded that it was not something to be worried about if it was just a "casual fling." Other than her testimony, Miglio produced no other evidence that Lewis provided this guidance. Notably, Miglio did not call Lewis or anyone else who might have been present during the conversation to testify at the hearing.

Miglio testified that later in August 2021, she accepted a position as an adjunct sergeant at the training academy, where she worked five days a week supervising the training of new correctional officer trainees. Putnam also returned to the training academy as an adjunct instructor, and Miglio continued her sexual involvement with Putnam. Miglio further testified that Putnam told her he wanted to keep their relationship private.

During the SID interview, Miglio acknowledged that she did not seek any guidance about her ongoing relationship with Putnam during her time at the training academy.

Finally, Miglio testified that once the correctional officer academy class ended in December 2021, she returned to Bayside, and Putnam returned to East Jersey State Prison; however, they continued their intimate relationship.

### The Selection Panel Interview

In March 2022, Miglio returned to the training academy as an adjunct sergeant, while Putnam resumed his role as an adjunct instructor. They continued to maintain their intimate relationship.

In April 2022, the DOC announced two open positions at the training academy: (1) a full-time instructor and (2) a full-time sergeant in the recruitment unit. Miglio applied for the sergeant position and encouraged Putnam to apply for the instructor role. Human Resources provides a list of eligible candidates to the major's office for panel interviews. The selection panel typically consists of three to four members, including a representative from Human Resources. The major of the training academy, or the assistant commissioner of the Division of Training, Recruitment, and Professional Development, appoints the panelists, who usually include at least two or three supervising officers. The interview process includes approximately ten questions. Human Resources provides five, and the sergeants on the panel provide five. These questions are submitted to Human Resources, which selects those to be asked and prepares the Panel Interview Candidate Rating Form. Candidates are rated on a scale from one (inadequate response) to five (exceeded expectations). (R-13.)

As one of Putnam's supervisors at the recruit training academy, Miglio was selected as a panel member. She never recused herself or disclosed her personal relationship with Putnam to anyone. However, Miglio testified that no conflict of interest existed because Human Resources assembled the panel members. This reasoning was illogical. Moreover, since Miglio did not disclose her relationship with Putnam, no one was aware that she should not have been appointed to the selection panel. Miglio admitted during the hearing that she prepared potential questions for the interview but didn't know which ones would be asked. She also acknowledged that she and Putnam studied for their interviews together.

On April 28, 2022, Putman interviewed for the full-time instructor position at the recruit training academy. Miglio sat on the selection panel and completed a candidate interview form for Putman, giving him a favorable rating. (R-13.) Although Miglio's

generated questions were not used verbatim, she acknowledged during her SID interview that versions of those questions were asked. Ultimately, Putman was selected for the full-time instructor position.

On April 3, 2023, nearly a year later, SID also investigated this incident. Once again, Caciccia and Schlusselfeld conducted a recorded interview, this time with Putnam, which was later summarized in a written report. (R-5; R-20F.) During the interview, Putnam stated that he had been an adjunct instructor at the training academy since August 2019 and was appointed to a full-time instructor position in June 2022. He acknowledged that, as a member of the training academy staff, he was held to a high standard of conduct both on and off duty. Putnam stated that Miglio was his "direct" supervisor. He further stated that he and Miglio first met at the recruit training academy, but in May 2021, their friendship developed into what he described as "friends with benefits." Importantly, Putnam admitted that Miglio encouraged him to apply for the full-time instructor position and assisted him in preparing for the interview. Putnam explained that this preparation involved Miglio asking him practice questions, but he couldn't remember whether the questions asked during the interview were the same ones Miglio provided during their practice sessions. Putnam agreed that it was inappropriate for Miglio to sit on his selection panel and acknowledged that Miglio was obligated to report their relationship. To clarify, Putnam said he wanted to keep the relationship discreet to maintain a separation between his professional and personal life, but never told Miglio not to report it to her supervisors.

Putnam stated that in August 2022, he ended his sexual relationship with Miglio because he wanted to date other people. However, the two remained friends and occasionally spent time together. Putnam specified that they continued to call and text each other and sometimes still hung out outside of work, which Miglio also testified to at the hearing. Miglio testified that although they were no longer having "sex per se," they continued to engage in physical contact and maintained a close personal friendship. Their work relationship, however, subsequently soured.

Miglio stated that she did not find out until later that Putnam was seeing Senior Correction Officer Samantha Sadler, who also worked at the recruit training academy. Incidentally, Putnam and Sadler would later marry.

### Supervision

#### Shimonis

For his part, Lieutenant Shimonis testified that he knew both Miglio and Putnam from their time together at the training academy. Shimonis testified that he had served as a sergeant at the training academy in spring 2022 and was appointed through a selection process to oversee the recruitment and training unit at the academy. He explained that he had known Putnam since 2019, as they attended the same Police Training Commission instructor certification course, and believed Miglio was Putnam's direct supervisor at the academy because she was a sergeant. Shimonis emphasized that officers at the academy are held to high standards and must maintain good standing among their peers.

Miglio's testimony regarding her supervision of Putnam is unreliable. She submitted two special reports against Putnam, one on January 23, 2023, and the other on March 17, 2023, which clearly show she was aware of her role as Putnam's supervisor. On January 23, 2023, after her sexual relationship with Putnam ended, Miglio authored a special report addressed to Lieutenant Egan Shimonis about the verbal counseling she provided to Putnam on January 16, 2023, for incidents of insubordination. (R-8.) This special report identifies four separate incidents: the first on November 21 and 22, 2022; the second on December 2, 2022; the third on December 29, 2022; and the fourth on January 11, 2023.

Regarding the first incident, Miglio reprimanded Putnam for "becoming agitated anytime that she addressed him in a supervisory capacity." Regarding the second incident, after Putnam objected to changes in the class schedule, Miglio "ordered" him to another area for discussion. When she began to speak, he talked over her, prompting her to inform Putnam "that he was being officially addressed, that he was not going to talk

over [her], and that he was not going to walk away . . . ." Regarding the third incident, Miglio had to "remove" Putnam from a classroom due to complaints about additional duties. Later, she notified him of an official meeting to discuss his behavior. Regarding the fourth incident, Miglio reported that Putnam became "agitated" after her criticism during a Defensive Tactics course. She tried to meet later, but he remained "agitated," leading her to say that they would meet instead on January 16, 2023. In her report's conclusion, Miglio stated that the verbal counseling provided on that date would serve as discipline, and she sought no further action. (R-8.)

Miglio testified that on March 17, 2023, she submitted another special report to Shimonis regarding Putnam's conduct. In the report from that date, Miglio wrote about incidents involving Putnam that dated back to January 2023, particularly his frustration with teaching the Close Custody Units course due to a lack of information in the lesson plan, as well as his failure to provide recruits with a handout during the Gender Identity Housing course. Miglio also stated that she could "prove" Putnam intentionally failed to provide the handout and expressed concern that his negative conduct could affect trainees in future classes. (R-11.) Thus, Miglio understood her role as Putnam's supervisor.

During the SID interview, Putnam stated that he believed his conversations with Miglio about the incidents described in the special reports were merely informal discussions, not official counseling. In fact, Putnam noted that the union was unaware of any counseling sessions mentioned in the reports. Indeed, Putnam asserted that he was not informed of his right to union representation during any of those sessions. (R-20F.)

Shimonis further testified that on January 20, 2023, Miglio called him to inform him that Putnam was frustrated with teaching the course on Close Custody Units due to a lack of information in the lesson plan. The class was rescheduled for another day, giving Miglio time to prepare and teach it. Shimonis testified that Miglio told him she thought Putnam needed verbal counseling, but did not give him the specifics or inform him about the incidents in her reports before issuing them. This testimony is also reflected in Shimonis's special report dated March 16, 2023, as well as in his SID interview. (R-12.)

Disclosure of Relationship

On Sunday, February 26, 2023, the day after the Polar Bear Plunge—an annual fundraiser attended by law enforcement to raise money for the Special Olympics—Miglio called Shimonis at home. Shimonis testified that neither he nor Miglio was working. Miglio called to inform him that Putnam had just contacted her, stating that he and Sadler had announced their relationship to their coworkers at the Polar Bear Plunge. Shimonis explained that during the call, Miglio told him that she and Putnam had been “expletive” for the past two years, and, as a result, she did not believe she could effectively supervise them. Additionally, Shimonis explained that Miglio asked him to send Sadler back to the Central Transportation Unit (her permanent assignment) and to transfer Putnam to the Custody Recruitment Unit. Shimonis stated that he instructed Miglio to submit a special report detailing what she had disclosed during the call and informed his supervisor about the call. Finally, Shimonis asserted that while he knew Miglio and Putnam were friends, he was unaware of their sexual involvement until Miglio’s call.

Miglio testified at the hearing and wrote in her special report dated February 27, 2023, that on February 26, 2023, the day before, Putnam texted her and said, “Listen[,] before you hear it from someone else, I want to let you know the girl I’ve been seeing is Sadler.” This was the first time Miglio disclosed to the DOC that she and Putnam “had previously engaged in exclusive sexual activity.” Miglio explained that her interpretation of the UEC, as she stated in her report, was that her relationship with Putnam did not require recusal under the New Jersey Uniform Ethics Code because the code only addresses relationships involving spouses, family ties, financial dependence, or cohabitation, and their relationship was merely a sexual one. She also reiterated that Putnam had asked her not to disclose their relationship.

The timing is also telling because Miglio only recognized a conflict after discovering that Putnam was dating Sadler. Miglio testified that she completed her report only after Putnam allegedly threatened her job on two occasions. The report, however, does not mention any such alleged threats. As part of the SID investigation, Cacicia received and reviewed the special report and inquired about the threats during Miglio’s interview; however, Miglio never provided any specifics. Cacicia also asked Miglio about other



supervisors with whom Putnam had conflicts, and Miglio named Lieutenant George Goldner and Sergeant Victor Davila. On April 14, 2023, Caciccia and Schlusselfeld conducted a video interview with Davila, which was later summarized in a written report. (R-7; R-20G.) Caciccia and SID investigator Jesse Akers also conducted a video interview with Goldner, which was later summarized in a written report. (R-7; R-20G.) Both Davila and Goldner described Putnam as an excellent instructor and denied disciplining Putnam but characterized interactions with Putnam as conversations about minor issues.

On March 21, 2023, after a conversation with Major Manstream, who oversaw the training academy, Shimonis wrote a report detailing his conversation with Miglio. (R-12.) In his report dated March 16, 2023, Shimonis wrote that on January 23, 2023, he spoke with Putnam, who confirmed his enthusiasm for working at the recruit training academy. Shimonis also expressed surprise in his report about Miglio's complaints against Putnam because he regarded Putnam's work ethic as "absolutely fantastic." (R-12.)

#### Sadler

Sadler testified that on the next workday following the announcement of her relationship with Putnam, February 27, 2023, she and Miglio discussed their relationship with Putnam. On March 8, 2023, Sadler documented the conversation in a special report because she felt uncomfortable after their discussion. Sadler testified that Miglio was her direct supervisor. Up to that point, she had not experienced any issues working with Miglio, but after that conversation and Miglio's statement that it would be uncomfortable to work together, Sadler submitted a special report, believing she needed to "protect herself." Later that day, Shimonis reassigned Sadler and Putnam to the first shift to avoid any conflict with Miglio and advised Miglio to refrain from contacting Putnam.

After February 26, 2023, Miglio and Putnam ended all personal contact with each other.

Shimonis testified that, because the SID investigation revealed Miglio sat on the selection panel for Putnam's interview for the full-time instructor position while they were

in a sexual relationship, Putnam's full-time position was revoked. He was then restored to his previous full-time position at East Jersey State Prison.

Given this discussion of the facts, I **FIND** that Miglio and Putnam maintained a personal, intimate dating relationship from May 2021 through August 2022. They were still involved in this relationship when Putnam interviewed for the full-time instructor position on April 28, 2022, and Miglio served on the selection panel. Notably, Miglio helped Putnam prepare for the interview by providing him with potential questions, giving him an advantage no other candidate received.

In addition, I **FIND** that Miglio knew she was Putnam's supervisor and was obligated to report their relationship. Miglio has completed annual ethics training nearly every year since 2010, with the most recent sessions in January and February 2022, while she and Putnam were actively involved in their relationship, and had received sufficient training to understand that withholding information about her relationship with Putnam was improper. The only reason Miglio did not disclose and report their relationship was because Putnam asked her not to. Miglio has held the title of sergeant since 2017, while Putnam was a correctional police officer. They worked at the DOC, a paramilitary organization where officers adhere to a chain of command. Commonsensically, both Shimonis and Putnam identified Miglio as Putnam's supervisor throughout their testimony, interviews, and reports. Once their personal relationship ended and their professional relationship deteriorated, Miglio chose to exert her influence over his work, evidenced by the three reports she wrote (January 23, 2023; February 27, 2023; and March 17, 2023) criticizing his performance and pointing out his disrespect toward her in her supervisory role. Miglio also counseled Putnam on January 16, 2023, and in a January 23, 2023, special report, raised additional concerns, which led Shimonis to counsel Putnam as well. Finally, Miglio had the authority to arrange Putnam's transfer from the recruit training unit. Following her special report dated February 27, 2023, Putnam's work schedule was altered, which also triggered an internal investigation into his workplace conduct. In short, Miglio's own words, as reflected in her reports, show that she was aware, as a sergeant assigned to the same unit, of her supervisory role over Putnam.

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

### **I.**

When an individual in the classified civil service is charged with violating a code of ethics, the process for removal or discipline shall be governed by the applicable provisions of the Civil Service Act, N.J.S.A. 11A:1-1 to 11A:12-6, and the Rules of the Civil Service Commission. No action for removal or discipline shall be taken under this subsection except upon referral or with the approval of the State Ethics Commission. N.J.S.A. 52:13D-23(d). In this case, the DOC obtained prior authorization from the State Ethics Commission to proceed with the investigation and discipline of Miglio. Therefore, I **CONCLUDE** that the DOC had the approval of the State Ethics Commission to proceed with the investigation and discipline of Miglio.

### **II.**

The Civil Service Act and the regulations promulgated thereunder govern the rights and duties of civil service employees. N.J.S.A. 11A:1-1 to 11A:12-6; N.J.A.C. 4A:1-1.1 to 4A:10-3.2. Civil service employees who commit wrongful acts related to their duties or provide other causes may be subject to major discipline under N.J.S.A. 11A:2-6 and N.J.A.C. 4A:2-2.3(a). The appointing authority bears the burden of proving the charges by a preponderance of credible evidence. In re Revocation of the License of Polk, 90 N.J. 550 (1982); Atkinson v. Parsekian, 37 N.J. 143 (1962).

Miglio was charged with conduct unbecoming a public employee in violation of N.J.A.C. 4A:2-2.3(a)(6). In addition, Miglio was charged with other sufficient cause under N.J.A.C. 4A:2-2.3(a)(12) for violating the DOC rules and regulations, as well as the UEC.

Law enforcement employees such as correction officers represent "law and order to the citizenry and must present an image of personal integrity and dependability in order to have the respect of the public . . . ." Twp. of Moorestown v. Armstrong, 89 N.J. Super. 560, 566 (App. Div. 1965), certif. denied, 47 N.J. 80 (1966). An officer may not "act or behave, either in an official or private capacity, to the officer's discredit, or to the discredit

of the Department. Officers are public servants twenty-four hours a day and will be held to the law enforcement higher standard both on and off duty.” (R-16.)

Those who serve and protect as police officers are not just government employees. They are, in fact, and by law, public officers, and as such, are held to a higher standard of conduct due to the inherent power and public trust associated with their position. See Moorestown v. Armstrong, 89 N.J. Super. 560 (App. Div. 1965); In re Phillips, 117 N.J. 567 (1990); see also Bowden v. Bayside State Prison, 268 N.J. Super. 301 (App. Div. 1993), certif. denied, 135 N.J. 469 (1994).

In paramilitary-like settings, such as police departments and prisons, maintaining strict discipline among employees is paramount. Rivell v. Civil Serv. Comm’n, 115 N.J. Super. 64, 72 (App. Div.), certif. denied, 59 N.J. 269 (1971); Newark v. Massey, 93 N.J. Super. 317 (App. Div. 1967).

#### Conduct Detrimental to Public Respect

Article I, General Provisions, Section 1, of the Rules and Regulations mandates that correctional police officers adhere to the laws, statutes, or ordinances of the United States and any state within its jurisdiction, including the UEC. The Rules and Regulations, Article 1, Section 2, state that officers should avoid behavior that violates the public trust. Article III, Professional Conduct, Section 3, reminds custody staff that they are public servants twenty-four hours a day, held to a higher standard and accountable for their conduct both on and off duty. (R-17.) Under the UEC, Article II, General Standards of Conduct, Section 4, a State officer, employee, or special State officer or employee is prohibited from knowingly “acting in any way that might reasonably be expected to create an impression or suspicion among the public having knowledge of his/her acts that he/she may be engaged in conduct violative of his trust as a State officer or special State officer or employee.” (R-16.)

In Appendix M of the UEC, the commission found violations of the UEC Article II, Misuse of Official Position or Information, in situations where the state employee had

official involvement in matters affecting the individual with whom they had a dating relationship.

In May 2021, Miglio and Putnam began a sexual relationship after meeting at the recruit training academy, which lasted at least until August 2022. Miglio was Putnam's supervisor and was selected to serve on the interview panel for his full-time instructor position at the training academy because she had not disclosed that she and Putnam were in an intimate relationship. As a panel member, Miglio developed and submitted potential questions for the interview. Furthermore, Miglio had applied for the full-time sergeant position at the recruit training academy. Miglio and Putnam studied together, and the support that Putnam received from Miglio was not offered to any other candidates interviewing for the full-time instructor position. Their study sessions involved quizzing each other in preparation for the interviews. On April 28, 2022, Putnam interviewed for the full-time instructor position at the recruit training academy, during which versions of the questions submitted by Miglio were asked. Miglio participated in the selection panel interview and completed a candidate interview form on Putnam, which resulted in a favorable rating. Consequently, Putnam was selected for the full-time instructor position. Miglio's conduct, by failing to recuse herself, demonstrates a failure to be impartial, eroding trust in her role as a law enforcement officer. I **CONCLUDE** that Miglio's behavior constituted conduct unbecoming, in violation of N.J.A.C. 4A:2-2.3(a)(6), and Human Resources Bulletin 84-17, including Rules and Regulations Article I, General Provisions, Section 1, Article 1, Section 2, and Article III, Professional Conduct, Section 3. I also **CONCLUDE** that Miglio violated the UEC, General Standards of Conduct, and Misuse of Official Position or Information because her conduct was detrimental to public respect and confidence, as others could perceive her actions as favoritism toward Putnam by providing him with information not available to other candidates, thus securing an advantage for Putnam.

#### Conflicts of Interest and Recusal

Rules and Regulations Article IX, Section 1, prohibits personal relationships that create the appearance of interfering with the proper performance of their duties, as well as Articles XIII and IX of the UEC, concerning Conflicts of Interest and Recusal on Official

Matters, which prohibits a State officer or employee, or a special State officer or employee, from being involved in their official capacity in any matter with an individual they are dating.

While there has been considerable emphasis on whether Miglio was Putnam's supervisor, determining a violation under the UEC does not require the actor to be a supervisor. The UEC states that any "State officer or employee or special State officer" must recuse themselves. However, the fact that Miglio was Putnam's supervisor makes her conduct even more egregious, as she held a position of power and leadership. Miglio and Putnam maintained a personal relationship from May 2021 through at least August 2022. They were involved during Putnam's interview for the full-time instructor position on April 28, 2022, where Miglio served on the selection panel. The specific label for the relationship is a matter of semantics. They had a sexual relationship and spent considerable time together outside of work. Miglio testified that she did not report the relationship because Putnam asked her to keep it confidential. Once Miglio and Putnam ended their relationship, it began to deteriorate. Miglio started holding Putnam accountable and issued special reports when he failed to recognize her role as his supervisor. LaBonne and Lane testified that correctional officers are required to disclose conflicts of interest, as specified in the Rules and Regulations as well as the UEC. Miglio's failure to recuse herself affected the work environment.

Therefore, I **CONCLUDE** that Miglio's failure to report her relationship to anyone, let alone recuse herself from supervising him and at the very least participating in the selection panel, violated Sections IX, Recusal on Official Matters, of the UEC and Section XIII, Conflicts of Interest. Furthermore, Miglio's failure to recuse herself from Putnam's selection panel violated Rules and Regulations Article IX, Section 1, because it created the appearance of impropriety or favoritism.

### III.

Major discipline may include removal, disciplinary demotion, or suspension for more than five working days. N.J.A.C. 4A:2-2.2(a). Depending on the conduct

complained of and the employee's disciplinary history, major discipline may be imposed. West New York v. Bock, 38 N.J. 500, 523–24 (1962).

Police officers are held to a higher standard than other public employees and must act as ambassadors to the public in "personal integrity and dependability." In re Phillips, 117 N.J. 567, 576 (1990) (quoting Moorestown, 89 N.J. Super. at 566); see also Bowden v. Bayside State Prison (Dep't of Corr.), 268 N.J. Super. 301, 305–06 (App. Div. 1993) (Correctional officers must maintain order and discipline to safely run a prison or jail.). As stated by the court in In re Emmons, 63 N.J. Super. 136 (1960), conduct that tends to destroy public respect for municipal employees and confidence in the operation of public services is deemed conduct unbecoming and is subject to discipline.

In Henry v. Rahway State Prison, 81 N.J. 571, 579 (1980), the New Jersey Supreme Court recognized that when determining the appropriate discipline, it is essential to consider factors such as the employee's position in relation to maintaining safety and discipline. Evidence can be presented regarding the impact on the institution and other correctional officers stemming from a breach of duty by an officer. Ibid.

However, in In re Carter, 191 N.J. 474 (2007), the New Jersey Supreme Court acknowledged that certain disciplinary infractions are serious enough to justify removal, even in the absence of a prior disciplinary history.

Later, in In re Herrmann, 192 N.J. 19 (2007), the New Jersey Supreme Court upheld the dismissal of an employee for conduct unbecoming in their respective position, despite the absence of a substantial past disciplinary record. The Court reasoned that a public employee's prior record is "of no moment" when the public employee is no longer competent to perform the job or is rendered unsuitable for the position and subject to termination by the county. The Court articulated that a police officer is a "special kind of public employee" and "must present an image of personal integrity and dependability to have the respect of the public." Id. at 35 (quoting Cosme v. Borough of E. Newark Twp. Comm., 304 N.J. Super. 191, 206 (App. Div. 1997)). Relying on Herrmann, the New Jersey Supreme Court, in In re Brian Ambroise, 258 N.J. 180 (2024), emphasized that the fundamental role of a correctional officer is to uphold the law. The Court further held

that the “[d]ismissal of an officer is especially warranted for those ‘infractions that [go] to the heart of the officer’s ability to be trusted to function appropriately in his position.’” Id. at 202 (quoting Herrmann, 192 N.J. at 35).

In this case, Miglio has been employed by the DOC since August 2009 and has served in a supervisory role as a sergeant since February 2017. As a public servant whose conduct is visible to the public, her personal involvement with Putnam and failure to recuse herself could reasonably be perceived to have compromised her objectivity or independence. As LaBonne and Lane testified, officers are guided in maintaining the highest standards of integrity, a principle instilled from the beginning. Miglio’s training records show her consistent completion of ethics training since 2010, with the most recent sessions held in January and February 2022. During this period, she was involved in a romantic relationship with Putnam. Miglio was aware of her obligation to report the relationship but chose not to disclose it, following Putnam’s request for secrecy. Her actions demonstrate susceptibility to undue influence by a subordinate’s request. Additionally, Miglio assisted Putnam in preparing for his interview before the selection panel and did not recuse herself during his interview, despite their personal relationship. This is particularly egregious given her position as Putnam’s supervisor. Motivated by personal interest, Miglio, who is entrusted with authority, chose to prioritize her own benefit and favor one candidate over others who did not receive similar attention. This conduct exemplifies a violation of ethical standards, putting personal interests above adherence to established rules and recusal responsibilities. Each of these factors individually undermines Miglio’s trustworthiness as a corrections officer, and collectively, they cast doubt on her qualification to serve as a sergeant within the DOC.

Furthermore, what is more troubling is Miglio’s failure to admit her mistakes and accept responsibility, which makes her unfit to continue as a corrections officer. Therefore, I **CONCLUDE** that Miglio must be removed from her employment in the DOC.

### **ORDER**

Given my findings of fact and conclusions of law, I **ORDER** that Miglio is **REMOVED** from employment at the DOC.



I hereby **FILE** my initial decision with the **CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION** for consideration.

This recommended decision may be adopted, modified, or rejected by the **CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION**, which by law is authorized to make a final decision in this case. If the Civil Service Commission does not adopt, modify, or reject this decision within forty-five days and unless such time limit is otherwise extended, this recommended decision becomes a final decision under N.J.S.A. 52:14B-10.

Within thirteen days from the date on which this recommended decision was mailed to the parties, any party may file written exceptions with the **DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF APPEALS AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS, UNIT H, CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION, 44 South Clinton Avenue, PO Box 312, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0312**, marked "Attention: Exceptions." A copy of any exceptions must be sent to the judge and to the other parties.

June 30, 2025

DATE

  
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**MAMTA PATEL, ALJ**

Date Received at Agency:

June 30, 2025

Date Mailed to Parties:

June 30, 2025

MP/jm

**APPENDIX**

**Witnesses**

**For Appellant:**

Anna Miglio, Appellant

**For Respondent:**

Brian LaBonne, Major, New Jersey Department of Corrections

Dana Lane, Director of the Equal Employment and Ethics Division, New Jersey  
Department of Corrections

Egan Shimonis, Lieutenant, New Jersey Department of Corrections

Samantha Sadler (Putnam), Senior Correctional Police Officer, New Jersey  
Department of Corrections

Daniel Cacicia, Senior Investigator, Special Investigations Division, New Jersey  
Department of Corrections

**Exhibits**

**For Appellant:**

A-1 Uniform Ethics Code Appendix M DOC180-191

A-2 Memorandum Supervisory Conflict of Interest Certification dated May 8,  
2023

**Joint:**

J-1 Preliminary Notice of Disciplinary Action dated 4/6/23 DOC01-02

J-2 Amended Preliminary Notice of Disciplinary Action dated 5/24/23 DOC04-  
06

J-3 Amended Preliminary Notice of Disciplinary Action dated 6/6/23 DOC07-09

J-4 Final Notice of Disciplinary Action dated 7/18/23 DOC10-12

For Respondent:

- R-5 SID Investigation Report dated 4/6/23 DOC19-33
- R-6 SID Supplemental Investigation Report dated 4/13/23 DOC37-39
- R-7 SID Supplemental Investigation Report dated 4/18/23 DOC40-42
- R-8 Special Custody Report by Sgt. Miglio dated 1/23/23 DOC43-45
- R-9 Special Custody Report by OFC Sadler DOC46-47
- R-10 Special Custody Report by Sgt. Miglio dated 2/27/23 DOC48-53
- R-11 Special Custody Report by Sgt. Miglio dated 3/17/23 DOC54-58
- R-12 Special Custody Report by Lt. Shimonis dated 3/21/23 DOC59-61
- R-13 Panel Interview Candidate Rating Form of OFC Putnam DOC62-66
- R-14 Miglio Training Summary Report DOC75-79
- R-15 HRB 84-17 DOC80-95
- R-16 Uniform Ethics Code DOC96-114
- R-17 Law Enforcement Personnel Rules and Regulations DOC197-218
- J-18 Miglio Work History DOC192-196
- J-19 Miglio Weingarten Administrative Rights form DOC35
- R-20 SID Interviews of:
  - A. Miglio
  - B. Lewis
  - C. Shimonis
  - D. Goldner
  - E. Sadler
  - F. Putnam
  - G. Davila